and at the very same time were dancing precisely the same dance underground immediately beneath them. The object of making so much noise was to intercept all communication with the sickness a'hots who were in the two men. The best doctor is the one who most jumps, howls and beats the earth with his feet. 755

The public who surrounded these goings on was there to give importance and greater virtue to the treatment, but the suspicion was in the air that the a'hot, on leaving the body of the possessed might take it into its mind to enter one of the other persons present.

This scene convinces me that: among the Indians, doctors earn their bread by the sweat of their... whole bodies; that among them also deceivers, by dint of much deceiving, finally [212] deceive themselves; and that the rabble was really convinced of the efficacy of the exorcisms.

And I was about to smile, moved by scorn and pity, but I remembered that c'etait tout comme chez nous [it was all much the same as it is with us--Translator] and... the smile died before it was born.

Chapter XII

Social Matters

These Indians do not differentiate the seasons of the year as we do, but rather by the several harvests: thus they speak of the season of algarrobo pod harvest, etc. 805

How could they even begin to divide the year into months or moons if they only count up to four? This very fact guarantees us a priori that they have not busied themselves with establishing the laws of the earth's or sun's movements. [802]

In spite of this it is remarkable that they divide the day up into innumerable portions according to the position of the sun, which takes the place of our hours. They also differentiate between various constellations such as the Pleiades, Venus, the Milky Way, and Centaur. [821]

And yet they do not have a word meaning "year." The Matacos use one, c-lúppe, which means period, and which has the same indeterminate meaning which that word has with us. Instead of "day," they say "sun" (i-qûa-la), and in place of "month,"

"moon" (i-que-lacq). In this they agree with the languages of all nations, a thing which is still preserved amongst us in poetic usage, while the common language of prose has undergone such changes with the passage of time that the words no longer appear to have their primitive material significance of sun and moon. M 805

Either by analogy from "moon" to "a light" or vice versa, the fact is that the word for both "moon" and "a light" is the same. M

This is not true of the word for "fire," for to this element special properties are attributed as the Chiriguanos condemn the bodies of those who die in the odor, or rather, taste, of evil, to be burned; and the Tobas and Matacos burn all bodies. This practice among the two latter nations is to be explained by their desire to hasten as much as possible the final condition which will benefit the deceased, that is, that as soon as the fleshy parts are consumed the soul will be able to descend into the earth and be among its companions. C 764

[213] Despite the fact that they are innocent of matches and sulfur, not to mention steel for striking fire, since they have no flint, they can produce fire at will. I have already described the manner in which they do this, by twirling one stick rapidly upon another which is lying on the ground until the sawdust which results -- which looks like finely powdered roasted coffee grounds -- begins to glow. Then they heap a kind of highly combustible wood onto it, blow it until a flame appears and from this they can make as large a fire as they wish. One of the two sticks which they use is from the chilca bush, which is aromatic, resinous and porous and is found in abundance throughout the Argentine Republic. M 372

It is customary to say that each Indian does everything for himself, and that this is the cause for his slowness and backwardness. But this is not so. They may be wanderers, but they do not for this reason refrain from a certain distribution of labor. There are amongst them weapon makers, canoe builders, net makers, weavers, etc., who sell their manufactured goods to their companions and receive others in exchange for them. They have, then, their guilds of arts and skills, but in an embryonic stage, of course. They also have particular terms to express themselves in this field, which in Mataco are formed from the word which indicates an object plus a particle indicative of function. Of these particles <u>'hi</u> M 463 M 192 463

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What further attracts my attention is the following: Instead of our "night" they use a word which means "earth," that is, hunát hunná, just as for "day" they make use of their word for "sun," as if they had intended to oppose one to the other. It may not be too farfetched to see in this a sort of philosophy in which the earth and the sun represent two opposite principles: darkness and light, good and evil. I, however, have not been able to perceive any such philosophy in their ideology, although it is true that something of this sort -- somewhat materialized -- is to be found in their religion, as we have had occasion to see in an earlier section of this treatise.

And is this business of using the sun, or light, to express the idea of time not an intellectual parallel or approach to the Aryan, for from the Sanscrit dyu, that is "light" [Spanish luz--Translator] came the Latin dies, the Spanish día, and the Italian di, all of which mean "day" or "day's effort."

Meanwhile, in order to say "this afternoon" they say hunná and quiá-hunná, and for "last night," hunná-tzi-nná, keeping thus to the same form and sequence followed in the order of words which we saw in "today," "tomorrow," etc.

Furthermore, their expression for "sky" is ppe-lé, which must 192 be translated as "that which is above," from ppé, "above" and lé 821 which is a contraction of lél-lé or c-lel-lé, a patronimic word which is used to express the concept of origin, provenience, father-land, etc.

It is said that savages have no abstract ideas, but I ask, is the 192 idea of "always" or "never" abstract or not? Without waiting for an 196 answer I say that these Indians in question have the word inne-mid which expresses "never," and c-lam-mej for "always," which they derive, respectively, from innem -- "more" (Italian mai, Latin umquam) and the negative d; and from j-lam, meaning "same" plus the postposition ej.

It may be objected these are expressions made up of words which separately mean something more limited, which is valid as far as the objection goes. The French, let it be remembered [267] say toujours, "all the days," with the meaning of "always" and thus express an idea which is indefinite, or rather infinite, by means of a word which of itself has a limited meaning as is the case with "day." The fact of the matter is that a given abstraction is not

limited to the words used to convey it but hinges rather on the intention behind it. If this were not so what could one say in defense of the English word "always"? 192 196

While we are on this subject let me mention that the particles naje and nenná -- the latter sometimes missing its first syllable, sometimes its last and shifting from i to e [sic] -- are used to make two verb tenses. The first, that is naje, being employed for the remote past or preterite and the other for the past perfect. For example: "to return" is tapil; "he returned" is tapil láje; "he has returned" is tapil-lé (the second l in both cases is the same as n, as was explained above in the treatment of icuála-el-láje). 192 196 805

In place of "midday" or "noon" they say icuála icni, which, as far as I can make out means "high sun" or "up above sun"; and in order to convey the idea of "midnight" they say hunnat-quiú-nej, which I take to mean "low earth" or "underneath earth." For "it is early" they say inataj, and for "it is late," hunáj.

They have a syllable, tde, or dthé, or ntdé, which is the basic element for a great number of adverbs of place and of time. For example: "why?" is atdyécque; "where?" is tdené; "whence?" is dtel che; "how?" is atde-tzó; "how much?" is tde-hoté; "when?" is tdé-naj-hote. Hoté alone means "as," and naj expresses the further meaning that the question refers to a somewhat remote period in the past. Let it be noted that wherever a precedes it usually refers to "thou," since the question is asked of a second person. This goes to show how important it is to know the circumstances of time (tense) and person to which the questions refer, when writing the answers.

I am afraid that I shall bore the reader with this mass of data on the Mataco language, and yet I do not know, for the life of me how to keep from telling that little which I have been able to learn of it and gather in the limited free time allowed me by my professional work and which usually comes only in the very late hours of the night. If I make digressions to keep the reader from becoming tired I fear that I shall write too lengthily, and if I make no digressions and write a straight report I fear to be too dry and boring.... Certainly I know not which way to turn. Who will suggest some bright idea which will afford escape from this slough? No one? 700